



## COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS

On April 23, 2020, Governor Kemp issued Executive Order 04.23.20.02, “Reviving a Healthy Georgia.” The Order mandates that **all public swimming pools shall not engage in in-person operations and shall remain closed to the public**. Additionally, the Order explicitly requires gyms and fitness centers to close pools and hot tubs at their facilities. The Order is effective through May 13, 2020, unless extended by the Governor.

### **The Executive Order applies to all public swimming pools, including:**

1. Public pools regulated under Title 31, Chapter 45 of the Georgia Code and Chapter 511-3-5 of the Rules of the Department of Public Health (including municipal, school, hotel, and motel pools, any pool to which access is granted in exchange for payment of a daily fee, and special purpose pools);
2. Pools operating under County Ordinances, including subdivision, apartment and country club pools;
3. Public pools as defined in the State’s mandatory International Swimming Pool and Spa Code; and
4. Water amusement rides as defined in Code section 25-15-51.

### **All public swimming pools must abide by the following requirements:**

1. No public pool may open to in-person use until May 14, 2020, or later if the Order is extended. Pools that are currently open to the public should be asked to voluntarily close in order to comply with the Executive Order.
2. A pool may conduct limited operations during the period when the pool is closed to the public. These limited operations include:
  - Performing maintenance activities, which may be done by employees or third-party service companies.
  - Requesting and performing inspections.
  - Hiring staff in preparation for opening to the public.

Pool owners/operators who conduct limited operations must implement the twenty-one (21) measures to mitigate the exposure and spread of COVID-19 among the workforce, found on pages 11 and 12 of Executive Order 04.23.20.02.

### **Enforcement of the Executive Order**

A violation of the Order is a misdemeanor. Law enforcement officers are responsible for enforcing the Order and “should take reasonable steps to provide notice prior to issuing a citation or making an arrest.” DPH, as the state agency with the primary regulatory authority for public swimming pools, will provide resources to assist in enforcement of the Order.



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Enforcement of any county or municipal ordinance or order that is either more or less restrictive than the Executive Order must be suspended.

### Additional Guidance

The Department is working to compile a public swimming pool guidance document for the eventual opening of pools once the Order is lifted or amended. Also, these references developed for spa maintenance and for the prevention of Legionella may be useful to operators.

- CDC guidance on closing hot tubs/spas for extended periods of time has been updated to address aquatics sector feedback related to hot tubs/spas with a plastered finish, which could end up cracking if drained for a prolonged period.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/aquatics-professionals/extended-hot-tub-closures.html>
- For spas, it is recommended to perform the CDC Legionella disinfection and cleaning procedures before opening. <https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/downloads/hot-tub-disinfection.pdf>
  - Follow step 4-9 and 12-13 in the guidance, filter media replacement may be at the operator's discretion.
  - Facilities may decide to test the hot tub/spa for Legionella before returning to service if previous device maintenance logs, bacterial testing results, or associated cases of Legionnaires' disease indicate an elevated level of risk to occupants.